

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated February 1, 2007 in conjunction with the enclosed Request for Continued Examination. Applicants have canceled claims 29-54 without prejudice or disclaimer, and Applicants have added new claims 55-72. Applicant have added to the specification, a Cross Reference to Related Applications. No new subject matter has been added by such amendments. Enclosed is a Petition for a Three Month Extension of Time to reply to the Office Action. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account 02-1818 for any fees which are due and owing.

The Office Action rejected Claims 29-54 under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,981,635 to Hughs-Baird et al. ("Hughs") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,251,013 to Bennett ("Bennett"). Applicants respectfully disagree with such rejection. Applicants submit that there is insufficient motivation to combine Hughs and Bennett to support such rejection. Without limiting Applicants' grounds for disagreement, Applicants point out that increasing player interest is not adequate motivation to make the Office Action's combination.

With respect to canceled claims 37 and 51, the Office Action stated that "[i]t is notoriously well known in the art to have triggering events to a feature game that comprise of amount of wager, maximum wager, etc." Applicants respectfully disagree with such conclusion. Each such claim sets forth, among other elements, the display of the interactive symbol upon satisfaction of the primary criteria, as claimed. Applicants submit that the Office Action's conclusion regarding triggering events to a feature game is improper as applied to such claims. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully disagree with such conclusion.

With respect to canceled claim 40, the Office Action stated that "poker tables are well known in the art to produce different payouts for different combinations." Applicants respectfully disagree with such conclusion. Such claim sets forth, among other elements, the transformed symbol, as claimed. Applicants submit that the Office

Action's conclusion regarding poker tables is improper as applied to such claim. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully disagree with such conclusion.

Despite Applicants' disagreement with the Office Action's rejection, Applicants have elected to cancel the rejected claims and add new claims 55-71. Applicants' cancellation of claims 29-54 is made without prejudice, disclaimer or admission with respect to the propriety of the Office Action's rejection. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the patentability of the subject matter claimed by such canceled claims through the filing of one or more continuation applications.

Independent new claim 55 recites, among other elements: ". . . receive a player input from the input device, the player input being associated with a movement of a first one of the symbols initially displayed on one of the stopped reels, the movement occurring relative to at least said stopped reel . . ."

Independent new claim 61 recites, among other elements: ". . . receive a player input from the input device, the player input being associated with a movement of a first one of the symbols initially displayed on one of the stopped reels, the movement occurring relative to at least said stopped reel . . ."

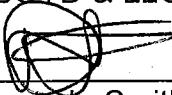
Independent new claim 67 recites, among other elements: ". . . receiving a player input from the input device, wherein the player input is associated with a movement of a first one of the symbols initially displayed on one of the stopped reels, wherein the movement occurs relative to at least said stopped reel . . ."

The combination of Hughs and Bennett does not disclose such elements of independent claim 55, 61 or 67.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims submitted with this Response are in condition for allowance. An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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